

Tech 21 SansAmp Character Plus English Muffy

Rounding off our reviews of Tech 21's impressive Character Plus series — **Nick Jennison** takes a closer look at Tech 21's SansAmp English Muffy. Providing classic amp-and-pedal combinations in an easy-to-use stompbox, with the English Muffy, you get two channels of crystal-clean British tone, each possessing independent volume, character, and drive controls with a global 3-band EQ. Kick on the Muff switch for an instant injection of distortion, perfect for tone-matching those classic rock and prog passages from yesteryear and beyond.

SOME things are just made to go together. Les Pauls & Marshalls. Cheese, tomato and carbs. Mick & Keef. Fish & chips. Steak & chips. In fact, anything with chips. What was I talking about?... Oh yeah, things that go together!

There are certain combinations of guitars, amps and pedals that are just magic. An AC30 and a Rangemaster. A Tweed Fender and a Tube Screamer. A Plexi and a Fuzz Face. You know it, I know it, and Tech 21 most definitely knows it. They've decided to give us a whole range of these magical

combos in the form of their Character Plus series. These all-analogue pedals combine their legendary SansAmp tube amp emulations with classic pedals, and the English Muffy is just such a pedal.

The English Muffy packs two channels of HiWatt-style amp tones into a single rugged enclosure, paired with a Big Muff-style fuzz. It's "Floyd In A Box", but it's also the perfect workstation for Doom, Stoner, Grunge, and even 60s/70s Classic and Psychedelic rock. The SansAmp circuit is a great representation of that creamy, wide-open HiWatt clean tone, but with a very healthy dollop

of gain on tap for Peter Green blues tones or Pete Townshend clank.

As with the other pedals in the Character series, the "Character" knob is your most powerful tone-shaping feature. It's a single knob that affects the gain architecture and the EQ response at various points in the circuit. It's clean and bubbly in its lower range, becoming progressively more gains and stinging as you crank it up, to the point of sheer violence when you set it full. There are two switchable channels with independent volume, drive and character controls and a shared 3-band

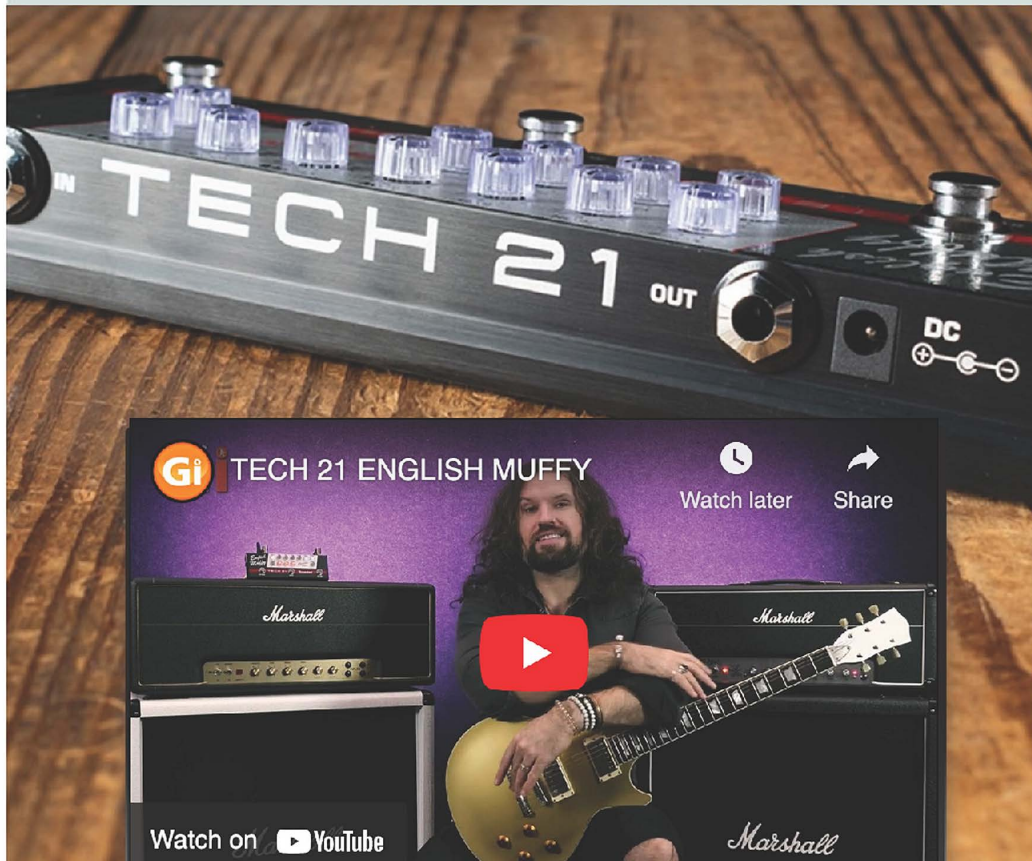
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EQ, meaning you can set up clean and dirty channels, rhythm and solo tones with a volume boost or any combination you can dream up.

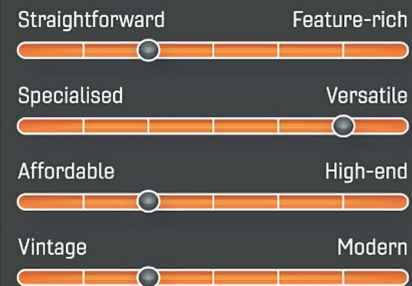
The Muff side of the pedal, by contrast, is very simple. It has the classic Level/Tone/Sustain control layout, and can be switched independently to the SansAmp in case you just



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MSRP: (UK) £299 | (US) \$249

The Breakdown



For fans of

- » Expansive HiWatt tones
- » Filthy Muff fuzz sounds
- » All-analogue pedals

want to use the English Muffy as fuzz into your amp of choice (and given how good it sounds, I can see why you'd want to!). Far from the mid-scooped hard clipper that some folks will try and pass off as a "Muff", the one found in the English Muffy is very authentic, with a collapsing, oscillating character at higher gain ranges that's highly addictive. It also works beautifully with the voice of the SansAmp, either as a dirty boost with the Sustain low and the Level high or as a full-throttle fuzz tone.

The English Muffy is a faithful, all-analogue representation of a whole family tree of classic tones. It works beautifully into the front of an amp, as a preamp running into a power amp or effects return, or direct to FOH or your DAW via the onboard XLR output. It's also very reasonably priced, considering how much some brands will charge you for a good Muff on its own, never mind one with two channels of SansAmp emulation and a ton of functionality attached!

